DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 387 187 JC 950 491

TITLE	Enrollment/Non-Returning Student Study for Winter 1995. A Research Report.
INSTITUTION	Schoolcraft Coll., Livonia, Mich.
PUB DATE	Feb 95
NOTE	27p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Community Colleges; Declining Enrollment; *Dropout Characteristics; Dropout Research; *Enrollment Influences; Followup Studies; Predictor Variables; Program Improvement; *School Holding Power; *Student Attitudes; *Student Educational Objectives; Telephone Surveys; Two Year Colleges; *Two Year College Students; Withdrawal (Education)
IDENTIFIERS	Schoolcraft College MI

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted at Schoolcraft College, in Michigan, to determine possible reasons for a drop in enrollment between fall 1994 and winter 1995. Of the 3,063 students who were enrolled in fall 1994 but did not return for winter 1995, 100 were surveyed by telephone to determine reasons for not returning, while demographic data were obtained from system files. Study results included the following: (1) for all non-returning students, 52.7% were female, 31% had not declared a major or were in general liberal arts programs, and almost one-fifth were attending college for the first time; (2) among the study sample, 45% indicated that their goal had been to earn an associate degree, while 31% cited personal enrichment; (3) 21% did not plan to return to the college; (4) with respect to what would influence them to re-enroll, students cited providing flexibility in course offerings, improved instructional quality, and financial help; (5) the most common reasons for not returning were financial difficulty, cited by 20%, and work-related issues, cited by 14%; (6) two internal factors found to affect enrollment were financial services provided to students and internal marketing efforts; and (7) external factors found to affect the college's enrollment were local employment rates and the number of high school graduates. Recommendations developed from the findings included increasing efforts to provide students with financial assistance and developing a long-term plan to use research data to increase retention. The survey instrument is appended. (KP)

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ED 387 187

Enrollment/Non-Returning Student Study for Winter 1995. A Research Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE *ENROLLMENT /NON-RETURNING STUDENT STUDY FOR WINTER 1995: A RESEARCH REPORT*

February 1995

Problem Statement: In winter semester 1995, Schoolcraft College experienced a drop in enrollment by 7% in headcount and 8% in credit hours. There was also a drop in fall 1994 semester enrollment by 3.5% in headcount. Although this study analyzes several variables which may be impacting enrollment trends, the main emphasis is to survey students regarding their enrollment status.

Purpose Statement: To study the possible reasons for the drop in enrollment between fall 1994 and winter 1995.

Description of the Study: The study sought information on four questions:

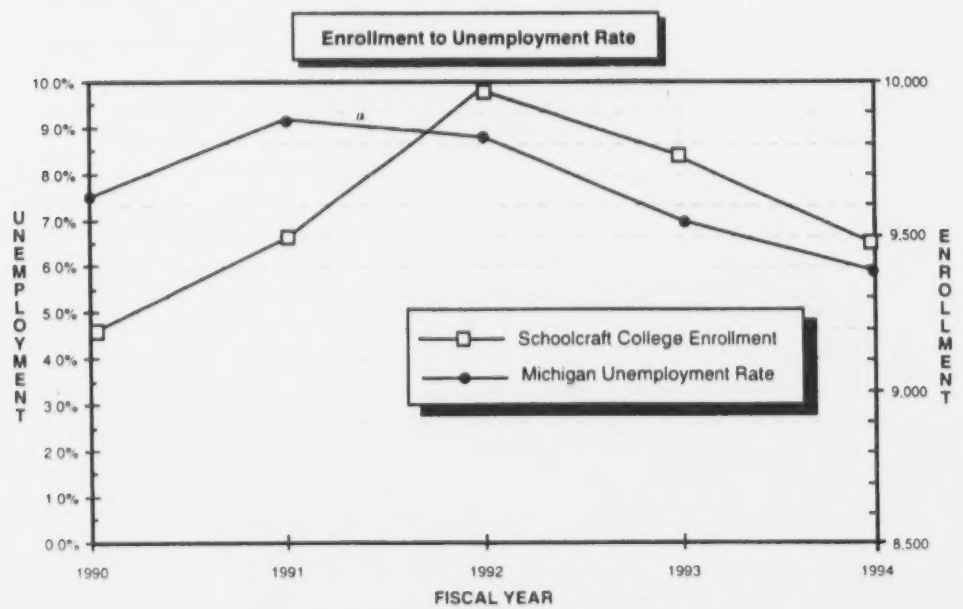
- To what degree do external factors impact our enrollment?
- To what degree do internal factors impact our enrollment?
- Why are students not returning?
- How many "non-returning" students plan to enroll in the future?

A student survey was conducted as part of the study. Students who were enrolled in fall 1994 but did not return for winter 1995 (Non-Returning Students) were telephoned by the Oakland Center for Social Research. In addition to surveying students, this study includes an examination of what factors may be occurring outside of the college which may impact enrollment, such as economic climate, high school graduating classes, and cost of education.

Results of the Study:

- To what degree do external factors impact our enrollment?

In previous studies, employment rates tend to be a major predictor of enrollment at Schoolcraft College. As the chart indicates, the fall semester enrollments tend to follow the unemployment rate. The unemployment rates started to decline in 1991 at which point our enrollment was peaking. Our enrollment has followed the decreased unemployment rate since 1992.



External Factors, Cont.

The number of high school graduates have also shown to somewhat influence enrollment patterns. In 1993, the lowest number of students graduated from district high schools. The numbers will begin to rise again through the late 1990s.

In addition, it is important to study the enrollments for other community colleges. All eight community colleges in the area are experiencing declining enrollments, ranging from -10.5% to -5.9% in credit hours.

- To what degree do internal factors impact our enrollment?

The study identified internal areas that could be reviewed. Internally we may be able to support more students through financial services since 20% of the non-returning students cited financial difficulties for not enrolling in winter 1995. It is also important to focus internal marketing efforts on retaining students rather than just recruiting new students. Of the 3,063 non-returning students for winter semester, one-third had first attended Schoolcraft in fall 1994 and almost one-half had enrolled within the past year. These are new market customers, and we need to develop relationships with them to retain and better serve them.

- Why are students not returning?

The study pointed out the need to understand why students come to us. There were 31% of the non-returning students who came to us for personal enrichment and 45% for degree completion. The study indicated a significant difference in retention between students who enrolled in an undeclared career or transfer curriculum and those enrolled in an occupational program. The study also identified that 57% of the non-returning students plan to return to Schoolcraft in the near future, and another 21% were "unsure". Only 21% do not plan to return. The survey indicated that the three main reasons that students did not return were: employment related, financial, and personal.

- How many "non-returning" students plan to enroll in the future?

This particular issue offers an opportunity for Schoolcraft to direct its marketing efforts to increase enrollment. There were 2,389 students who were planning to return next semester, at a later date, or were unsure. If we were to enroll all of these students, the tuition revenue itself would generate $595,626. Only 21% or 643 of the 3,063 non-returning students did not want to return to Schoolcraft.

In summary, there were five recommendations made. In short form, they are:

1) Collect more defined data on enrollment to better predict trends.

2) Increase efforts to provide students with some type of financial assistance and support.

3) The administration needs to plan retention strategies to market to students about returning to Schoolcraft.

4) Use baseline data to develop strategies to increase retention and outreach to students in career programs. Develop secondary plans to define market demands of students seeking personal enrichment.

5) A long-term plan should be investigated to continually collect the data and use to increase retention. Direct resources to conduct outreach to non-returning students on an ongoing basis.

RESEARCH REPORT: ENROLLMENT/NON-RETURNING STUDENT STUDY FOR WINTER 1995

Date: February 14, 1995

Prepared by: Office of Grants and Institutional Research

Requested by: Vice President of Instruction

Data Sources: Prime Colleague System
Phone Surveys

Problem Statement: In winter semester 1995, Schoolcraft College experienced a drop in enrollment by 7% in headcount and 8% in credit hours. There was also a drop in fall 1994 semester enrollment by 3.5% in headcount. Although this study analyzes several variables which may be impacting enrollment trends, the main emphasis is to survey students regarding their enrollment status.

Purpose Statement: To study the possible reasons for the drop in enrollment between fall 1994 and winter 1995.

Outcome Statement: Identify the major problems with retaining students and make recommendations for improving student retention.

Description of the Study: A telephone survey was done as part of this study. The Non-Returning Student Survey was completed by a random sample of students who were enrolled in fall 1994 but did not return for winter 1995. Personal information on students was downloaded from the Prime Colleague System to help to identify any demographics which may impact student retention.

In addition to surveying students, this study includes an examination of what things may be occurring outside of the college which may impact enrollment. We know that external variables play a part in enrollment trends. Far from operating in a vacuum, organizations are subject to and influenced by numerous external and internal forces.[1] Trend data such as economic climate, high school graduating classes, and cost of education can influence enrollment rates. These are included as part of the study to compare to our internal data to allow a comprehensive review of potential issues.

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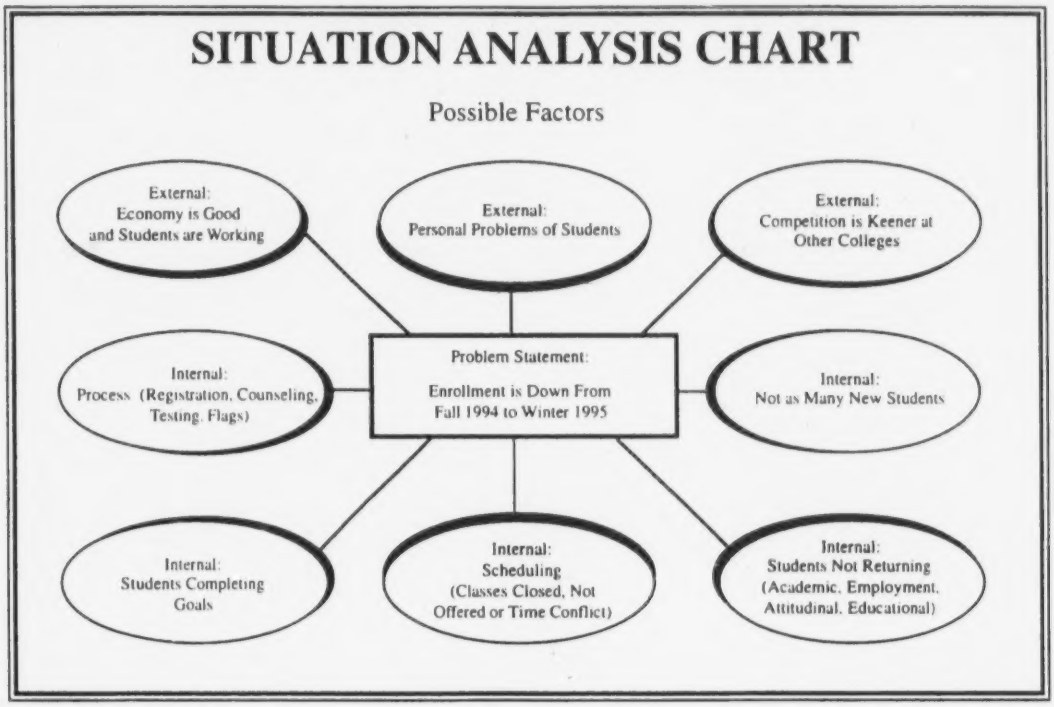
[1] Enrollment Projection Report, Schoolcraft College, 1986.

Background: Before studying an issue as complex as enrollment, the Research Office outlined a series of variables that would need to be included in the study. This process listed the issues or problems that may be associated with a drop in enrollment. The list then helped in the formation of the surveys, the identification of variables which needed to be collected, and the research questions to be answered. The Situation Analysis chart, which follows problem-solving principles, outlines possible variables to study and formulates research questions to guide the study.


SITUATION ANALYSIS CHART
Possible Factors
External: Economy is Good and Students are Working
External: Personal Problems of Students
External: Competition is Keener at Other Colleges
Internal: Process (Registration, Counseling, Testing, Flags)
Problem Statement: Enrollment is Down From Fall 1994 to Winter 1995
Internal: Not as Many New Students
Internal: Students Completing Goals
Internal: Scheduling (Classes Closed, Not Offered or Time Conflict)
Internal: Students Not Returning (Academic, Employment, Attitudinal, Educational)

The chart focuses on both external and internal factors.

External causes could include:

1) employment rate (everyone is working) and economic indicators (everyone is working overtime)

2) personal problems of students may be increasing (family demands, health problems or financial difficulties)

3) our competitors may just be stealing our students (or are doing a better job of recruiting/retaining students)

Internal causes could look at such issues as:

1) process (registration, counseling, testing, flags)

2) less new students enrolling for winter semester as in the past

3) students are not returning because of:
   - academic problems (poor grades, academic dismissal)
   - employment (class offerings conflict with work schedule)
   - attitudinal issues (have decided college is not that important)
   - educational related issues (prerequisite courses, tuition/fees costs are too high, have transferred to another college)

4) scheduling of courses does not meet their needs

5) students have met their intended goals by completing those courses they wanted to take or they have completed a degree

We also don't know how many of our non-returning students still plan to enroll sometime in the future. We are often quick to think they are permanent drop-outs. This survey should set a benchmark of the percentage of those non-returning students who are drop-outs (never plan to return), opt-outs (have completed their goal and do not plan to return in the near future) and stop-outs (plan to return soon). If we know something about non-returning students, we can gear marketing strategies for increasing retention.

Although not all the internal and external issues will be studied, the Situation Analysis Chart helps to focus on four general questions which will provide direction for the data collection and analysis.

- **To what degree do external factors impact our enrollment?**
- **To what degree do internal factors impact our enrollment?**
- **Why are students not returning?**
- **How many "non-returning" students plan to enroll in the future?**

Methodology:

Collecting Demographic Data

Time is precious for people. This makes it important to try to design surveys as short as possible. One method to do this is to not ask questions for which you already have the answers. For example, on the Colleague system we have student demographic data on gender, ethnicity, age, GPA, first term enrolled, etc. This means more up front work for the Research Office to pull

student information and match it to the surveys. However, it does allow the staff the opportunity to study the demographics of the total population which is being studied.

Non-Returning Demographic Data

The Research Office accessed the Prime data through requests to Information Services. Information Services staff provided raw data files that were loaded on the server and then downloaded by the Research Office into Excel spreadsheets for analysis. All students who enrolled in fall semester 1994 were requested. They were divided into two sets: those who had returned in Winter semester and those who had not returned.

These variables were analyzed to determine if there are any significant differences between students who did not return in the winter and those who did. There were twenty variables which were collected.

Criteria: All students enrolled F'94 (credit courses)

- Student ID
- Student Name
- Student Address (complete)
- Student Telephone Number
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Major - Program Code
- If they received certificate/degree - the date conferred
- ASSET Scores
- Current GPA
- Total Credit Hours Attempted
- Total Credit Hours Received
- Term GPA F'94
- Credit hours attempted in fall 94
- Residency
- FTIAC - First time in any college
- First Term at Schoolcraft
- Transferred Credits from another institution
- The question asked on the Admissions Form "What is your primary reason for enrolling at Schoolcraft College?

In total, there were 3,357 students who did not return from fall to winter semesters. Of these 3,357 students, 294 were graduates. This left a remaining pool of 3,063 for random selection for inclusion of the survey. Through SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), 300 names were selected using the random generator of the software package. Of these 300 names, 100 students would be surveyed. The sample size was over-selected because non-returning students are often difficult to reach.

Demographics were collected on all students for analysis. For those students who participated in the surveys, their demographic information was linked back to the database for any comparisons on the survey sample, their responses and the total group. It is important for statistical purposes to compare the demographics of the non-returning students of the sample to the demographics of all non-returning students to ensure the sample adequately represents the total population under study.

The demographic data that was downloaded from the Prime Colleague system was analyzed using SPSS Mac version to run: frequencies and descriptives, crosstabs and chi-squares.

Survey Methodology:

The Non-Returning Student Survey questions were developed by Schoolcraft College research and administrative staff, Oakland Center for Social Research, and Project Outreach. The Oakland Center for Social Research assisted in formatting the questions for a telephone survey and conducted the Non-Returning Student Survey. Project Outreach is a Michigan Department of Education funded project to survey on an ongoing basis community college students. Many of the questions were used from the Project Outreach survey, "Michigan's Non-Returning Students".

As stated, the Oakland Center for Social Research conducted the Non-Returning Student Survey. The completed telephone surveys were returned to the Office of Grants and Institutional Research for data entry and analysis.

The survey was entered on a FileMaker Pro database and exported to an Excel spreadsheet for manipulation by SPSS. SPSS was used to run simple frequencies, crosstabs, and chi-squares.

Demographic Data: Non-Returning Students
Source: Prime Colleague System

In total, there were 9,512 students on the Prime system as being registered for credit courses in the fall term. There were 3,357 credit students who did not return for the winter 1995 semester. Of these 3,357 students there were 294 graduates. For the purposes of this study, the graduates were excluded from the group and the remaining number of non-returning students was 3,063. Of the 9,512 students, 3,063 or 32% were non-returning.

The non-returning students were 52.7% female and 47.3% male. Compared to all students in fall semester, the enrollment by gender was 58% female and 42% male.

Majors for students who did not return were concentrated in eight areas (those students with no program codes on the system were not included in the percentage count):

Major	Number	Percentage
Undeclared Career	493	17%
Liberal Arts	205	7%
Undeclared Transfer	186	7%
Criminal Justice	144	5%
Business Administration	114	4%
Related Instruction	106	4%
General Business	97	3%
Computer Info Systems	97	3%
Totals:	1,442	50%

As indicated in the chart, the majority of students who do not return are in program areas that are undeclared or general liberal arts. Although there is no significant difference in retention between students enrolled in occupational education programs and transfer programs, there is a significant difference in retention of students enrolled in undeclared program areas (undeclared career and undeclared transfer) and all other program areas.

Non returning students were 59% in-district residents and 40% out-district residents. Only 1% were out-of-state, foreign, or seniors.

Of the non-returning students, almost one-fifth of them were attending college for the first time. In comparison, 23.9% of returning students were new students for fall 1994.

Of the 3,063 non-returning students, one-third first attended Schoolcraft in fall 1994, attending for only one term. Almost half of the students (or 1,283 students) who did not return had enrolled within the past academic year.

There were over one-third of the non-returning students who indicated on their admission form that their primary reason in attending Schoolcraft was for personal enrichment. Generally these students are enrolling in classes as they need them and are not pursuing a degree program. Also

approximately one-third of the returning students also indicated that their reason for enrolling was personal enrichment.

The study indicated that of the other non-returning students only 16% were pursuing a degree and 15% indicated "other" on their admissions form. For returning students, 20% are pursuing degrees and 14% chose "other".

Keeping in mind the greatest percentage of students enrolled for personal enrichment, over one-third of the students only completed 3 or 4 credit hours. Credit hour completion ranged from 1 credit hour to 20 credit hours. Over 500 students (16%) withdrew, received E's or received incompletes.

There were 15% of the 3,063 non-returning students who had transferred in credit hours with eight hours and 15 hours being the most cited.

The ASSET test was taken by 58% of the non-returning student group. This number seems appropriate since approximately 20% of the students in this group had been enrolled prior to mandatory testing in 1989 and another 15% had transferred credits to Schoolcraft.

The age breakdown of the 3,063 non-returning students was:

Age Categories	Frequency	Percentage
<18	11	.4
18-22	1096	35.8
23-25	471	15.4
26-30	479	15.6
31-40	609	19.9
41-50	303	9.9
51-60	70	2.3
>60	23	.8

The average age was 28.7 with a median age of 26 and mode age of 20. This is only slightly higher than returning students who were as an average 27.6 with a median age of 24 and a mode age of 19.

The average GPA for fall term for students non-returning in winter 1995 was 2.07. Non-success students who received a 2.0 or less were 34% of the non-returning population. On the other end, there were 16% of the students who received a term GPA of 4.0.

Non-Returning Survey Results: Input from 100 Prior Students

Of the 3,063 students who did not return, 100 were randomly selected and contacted by telephone to answer fourteen questions about their goals, experiences, and plans at Schoolcraft College.

Question one: *What was your purpose in attending Schoolcraft College?*

When asked what their purpose/educational goals was at Schoolcraft, the greatest number of students indicated it was to receive an associate degree (45%). Another 31% stated that they were enrolled only for personal enrichment. On the computer system records, there were 34% of the overall non-returning student population who indicated upon admissions that they were attending for personal enrichment. These percentages are fairly close and show the confidence level of the sample to the overall population.

Another 27% planned to take courses to transfer to another college or university and 25% were enrolled to improve existing job skills. There were only 13% enrolled to prepare for their first career job.

Question two: *How do you expect to accomplish your goal at Schoolcraft College*?

Most students stated that they planned to meet their goal by obtaining a degree (42%) or transferring to a university (23%). Almost one-third were taking only a selected course or courses. If we compare student retention of those who stated that they did not plan to return in the future and their intent of seeking a degree, taking selected courses, or transferring, we find there is a significant difference.

Q2 accomplish goal by Q3 enroll in future

Count	Q3 No	Next Term	Later	Unsure	Row Total
Q2	.0	1.0	2.0	3.0	
1.0 SELECTED COURSE	7	5	5	12	29 / 32.2
4.0 ASSOC	6	11	20	1	38 / 42.2
5.0 TRANSFER	5	7	5	6	23 / 25.6
Column Total	18 / 20.0	23 / 25.6	30 / 33.3	19 / 21.1	90 / 100.0

Chi-Square	Value	DF	Significance
Pearson	21.27539	6	.00164
Likelihood Ratio	23.81263	6	.00057
Mantel-Haenszel	1.31940	1	.25070

Minimum Expected Frequency - 4.600
Cells with Expected Frequency < 5 - 2 OF 12 (16.7%)

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Based upon the crosstab, it appears that students who are pursuing an associate degree are more likely to be returning next term or later than those who are only taking selected courses.

Question three: *Do you plan to enroll at Schoolcraft College in the future?*

The following chart shows the percentage of students who plan to return to Schoolcraft:

Response	No	Yes, Next Term	Yes, At Later Date	Unsure	Market Base*
Percentage of 100	21%	25%	32%	21%	78%
Projected to Total of 3,063	21% of 3,063=643	26% of 3,063=765	32% of 3,063=980	21% of 3,063=643	2,389

*Market Base is the total of: Yes, next term; Yes, at later date; and Unsure.

As indicated in the chart, only 21% of the students do not plan to return to Schoolcraft while 78% are planning or possibly planning to return. If these numbers were projected to the total non-returning student population from fall 1994, there would be 2,389 students possibly interested in returning at a future date (or our market base). Considering that these students were taking an

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average of 4.6 credit hours per semester, we can calculate the potential revenue that would be generated by these 2,389 students.

Formula:
2,389 students x 40% non-residents x $68 per credit hour x 4.6 hours = $298,912 2,389 students x 60% resident x $45 per credit hour x 4.6 hours = $296,714
Total Potential Tuition Revenue: $595,626

The same formula, using only those students who said "yes, next term" or "yes, at a later date" (eliminating those who are "unsure"), would still generate $435,063.

In a previous study of non-returning students conducted at Del Mar Community College in Texas, it was found that at least 54% of all non-returning students in the study were classified as stop-outs. The estimated number of true drop-outs was between 3% and 26%. That is a considerable improvement over the 100% that would have been reported for this group on the basis of information that existed before the study began.[2]

Question four: *What one factor would most influence you to re-enroll at Schoolcraft College?*

This question was asked as an open-ended question. It was then coded into categories by the interviewers. Although this type of question will give you qualitative input, it becomes difficult to conduct quantitative analysis. Most often answers seem to have a category of their own and the data can only be generated into lists. Therefore, it is best to review the comments in their totality (attached). If we subjectively list the most frequently given responses, they are:

Flexibility in course offerings
Improved instructional quality
Financial help
More class offerings
Attending Police In-service
Don't know

Some examples of these comments are:

If I had more individual help from teachers.

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[2] L.A. Bonham and J.A.I. Luckie, Community College Retention: Differentiating Among Stopouts, Dropouts, and Optouts, Community College Journal of Research and Practice, Taylor and Francis, 17:543-554, 1993.

I was disappointed in the quality of instruction in two classes (Math & Bio). They were supposed to be lower-level classes but were over our heads. The instructor didn't present the material well. Two of my classes were canceled late because of lack of enrollment. I was forced to take classes at a bad time for me and had to drop. I couldn't get a refund and I blew a whole semester. I transferred to Henry Ford.

I have a four-year degree and work in the electronics field. My employer required I take an out-of-state trip. The instructor wouldn't allow missed quizzes or classroom work to be made up. Rather than get a low grade, I dropped the class. I felt that I was forced to drop out.

Question five: *Why did you not return to Schoolcraft College?*

Again this question was open-ended and the comments should be read in their entirety for the best sense of students' input. When categorized, financial difficulty* was the most cited reason (20%), while work related issues accounted for about 14% of the reasons and personal issues another 11%.

Question six: *Do you think a visit with a Schoolcraft counselor or faculty member would have been helpful to you at the time you were terminating your experience at Schoolcraft College?*

Students generally responded that intervention would not have been helpful (63%) and only 12% stated a definite "yes". One-fourth of the students felt that it didn't apply or didn't know if it would have helped.

Question seven: *I am going to read several statements about Schoolcraft College. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each statement.*

The purpose of this question is to get to internal issues that may be at work in the non-retention of students from fall to winter semester. The following chart provides quantifiable perceptions of non-returning students.

* Financial difficulty included saving for college, financial aid paperwork, and priority of where money is needed (i.e. car vs. college).

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	NA	Did not answer
SC has high quality academic programs	11%	78%	3%	0%	6%	2%
SC has high quality academic programs in my subject area	11%	73%	9%	0%	6%	1%
There are a large number of courses offered	11%	77%	5%	1%	5%	1%
SC has too many requirements for entrance into college level courses	0%	7%	69%	10%	13%	1%
SC has too many general ed requirement courses	1%	18%	60%	2%	18%	1%
SC offers a variety of upper level classes	1%	52%	10%	0%	35%	2%

Question eight: *In your opinion, was the cost of fees at Schoolcraft College reasonable?*

Of those who answered the question, 64% of the students felt that fees were "somewhat reasonable", while 14% thought they were unreasonable and 19% thought they were very reasonable. 83% felt that fees were reasonable.

Question nine: *In your opinion was the cost of tuition at Schoolcraft College reasonable?*

Students who answered this question felt that tuition was somewhat reasonable (62%), very reasonable (30%) an unreasonable (6%). It appears that students felt that tuition was more reasonable than fees. 92% felt tuition was reasonable.

Question ten: *Do you feel you received your money's worth from Schoolcraft College?*

The majority of students felt that they got their money's worth at Schoolcraft (77%). There were 14% of the students who felt that they did not receive their money's worth. (This is interesting when you consider the population is the student group who did not return.)

Question eleven: *How would you rate your educational experience at Schoolcraft College?*

Of those who answered question eleven, 68% of them rated their experience at Schoolcraft as good or excellent. Four percent rated their experience below average, another 3% rated it as fair, and 24% rated it average.

Question twelve: *If you rated your experience as below average, why?*

There were only four who rated it below average and of those four, three provided comments. One student was advised by a counselor to take a specific class to learn basic computer functions and the class was mostly word processing. The student dropped the class and felt he/she had a bad experience. Another student specifically felt the Hazardous Material Operation class which is part of the Fire Academy was poorly taught. And the third student felt that he/she was just not motivated.

Question thirteen: *Were you attending classes on the main campus of Schoolcraft College or an extension location?*

Most students were attending the Livonia campus (51%), 20% at extension sites, and 26% were attending both.

Question fourteen: *Would you like to be contacted by Schoolcraft about returning?*

There were 38% of the students who would like to be contacted regarding returning to Schoolcraft. Of those who wanted to be contacted, 34% were pursuing an associate degree, 31% were seeking transfer credits, and 11% were unsure.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

The Four General Questions

- **To what degree do external factors impact our enrollment?**

Employment

As part of this study, we looked at two major areas that might impact our enrollment. The first was employment, since in previous studies it has been shown to be a major factor in enrollment increases or decreases[3]. As the chart indicates, the fall semester enrollments tend to follow the unemployment rate. The unemployment rates started to decline in 1991 at which point our enrollment was peaking. Our enrollment has followed the decreased unemployment rate since 1992.

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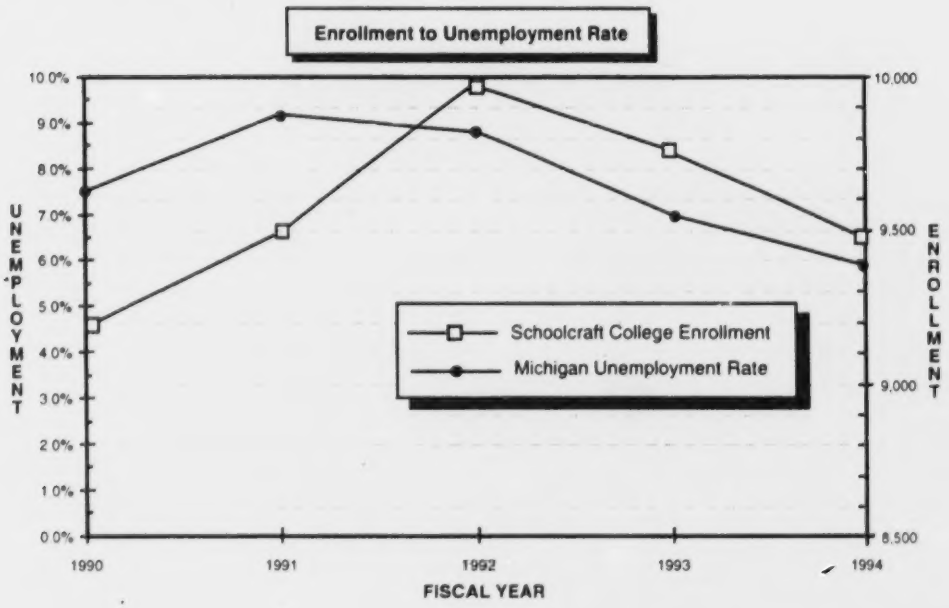
[3] Enrollment Projection Model, Schoolcraft College, 1986.

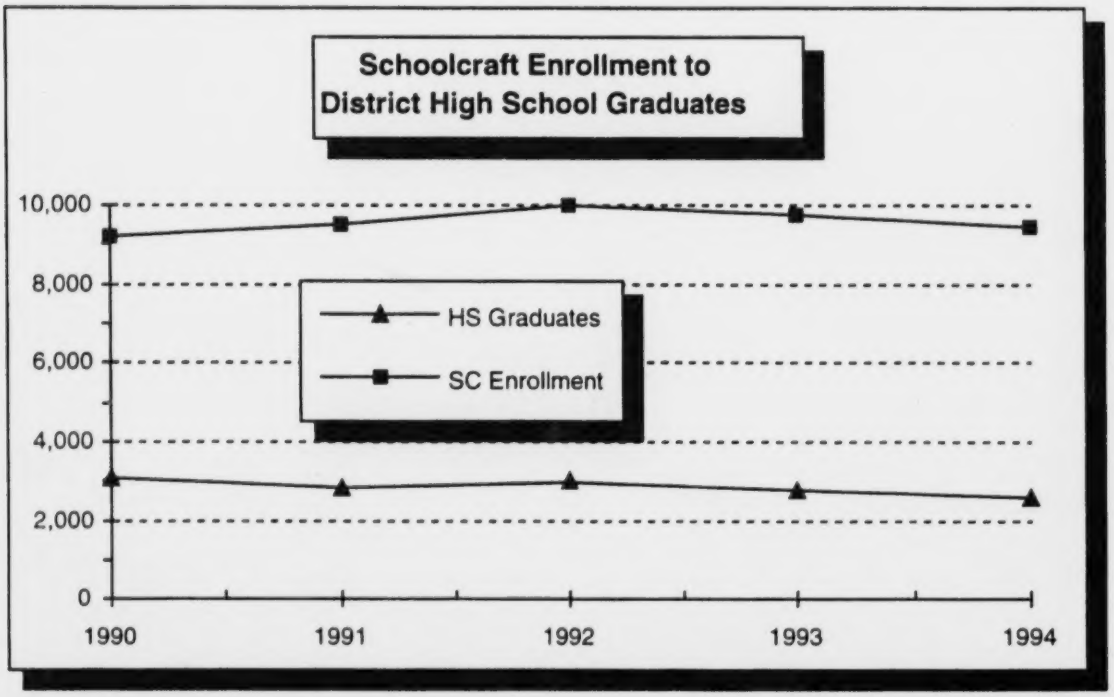


High School Graduates

The number of high school graduates have also shown to somewhat influence enrollment patterns. In 1993, the lowest number of students graduated from district high schools. The numbers will begin to rise again through the late 1990s.

High School	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
Churchill	551	464	467	380	375	353	387
Clarenceville	130	135	118	105	94	86	83
Franklin	395	407	342	282	316	310	306
Garden City	427	370	303	319	355	270	310
Northville	320	315	276	261	290	278	263
Plymouth-Canton	650	613	572	537	534	533	516
Plymouth-Salem	666	637	551	526	520	540	493
Stevenson	530	550	449	439	437	412	438
TOTAL	3669	3491	3078	2849	2921	2782	2796

The next chart shows a comparison of total high school graduates to fall semester enrollment. Except for fall semester 1991, Schoolcraft's enrollment is reflective of the high school graduation rates.



Enrollment Changes at Other Colleges

It is important to study the enrollment for other community colleges in the area to determine if the enrollment declines are only for Schoolcraft or if there are similar problems at other sister institutions. The following chart lists the enrollment changes for winter 1994 to winter 1995 from area community colleges.

College	Heads	Hours
Jackson	-5.5	-10.5
Schoolcraft	-7.0	-8.0
Oakland	-7.2	-7.0
Monroe	-5.8	-7.0
Macomb	-5.6	-7.0
Wayne County	NA	-7.0
Henry Ford	-3.8	-6.3
Washtenaw	-3.0	-5.9

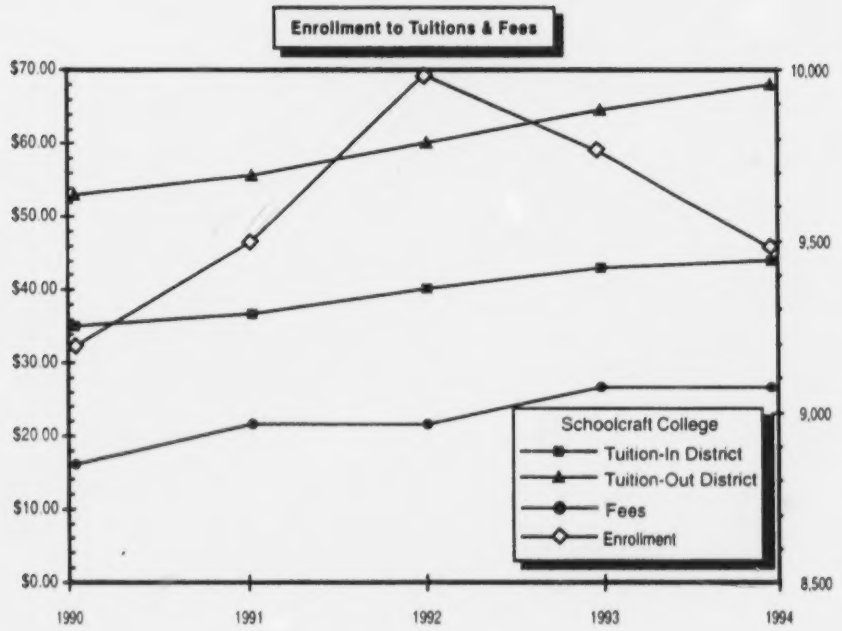
All community colleges in southeastern Michigan are experiencing drops in enrollment. The range is from a 5.9 percent decrease at Washtenaw Community College to a 10.5% decrease at Jackson Community College.

Recommendation: The recommendation on external factors is to collect more defined data in order to better project their impact on enrollment. Understanding that these elements impact the college, we should develop strategies to help offset any changes. For example, if we know that a drop in unemployment adversely affects our enrollment, can we be more flexible in our delivery systems to meet the needs of working adults? Currently the College has formed an Enrollment Task Force Committee. They are beginning to design both short- and long-term strategies to help offset enrollment decreases. They should review this data and make recommendations for marketing strategies.

- **To what degree do internal factors impact our enrollment?**

There are several areas that the Enrollment Task Force is beginning to study. Internally, they are looking at the offering of classes, working with students whose classes have been canceled, and identifying new marketing strategies.

The study identifies other areas that could be reviewed. The first is the financial impact of education on students. The relationship of enrollment to tuition is important to review, especially in light of the number of students in the surveys that indicated financial difficulty as one of the reasons they were unable to attend Schoolcraft. The following chart compares in-district, out-district tuition, and fees with enrollment.



Recommendation: If the College continues to be under financial constraints from dwindling resources from the State and caps on property taxes, and must raise tuition, efforts should be increased to provide students with some type of financial assistance and support.

Another important facet of internal forces is the whole issue of retention. Of the 9,512 students who enrolled at Schoolcraft in the winter semester, 3,063 or 32% did not return in the winter. We must increase our efforts to reach out to our students if we wish to develop "client relationships". A recent article in "Future Scan" touched on some important marketing principles[4] :

> *It costs five times as much to acquire a new customer as it costs to service an existing customer.*
>
> *Most businesses lose about 25% of their customers annually; cut that by 5% and profit margins could double.*
>
> *65% of the average company's business (and up to 80% of its profits) come from a core of long-term, repeat, high-usage customers.*
>
> *The most indispensable element is dialogue with, feedback from, and information about, each customer.*
>
> *Treat customers as collaborators.*
>
> *Establish an internal organization which defines, measures and is configured for individualization and customization.*

[4] Roger Selbert. The Decade of the Customer. Future Scan. No. 807. October 24. 1994.

The non-returning student survey indicated that of the 3,063 non-returning students, one-third first attended Schoolcraft in fall semester 1994 and almost half had enrolled within the past year. These are new market customers, and we need to develop relationships with them to retain and better serve them.

Recommendation: The administration needs to plan retention strategies to market to students about returning to Schoolcraft.

- **Why are students not returning?**

If we want to develop a systematic process by which to encourage enrollment at Schoolcraft College, we must begin to understand why students do not return. We first need to understand why students come to us. In general, they like our location. The survey indicated that many come for personal enrichment (31%), while others are seeking degrees (45%). The majors of these students are diverse, and the greatest percentages of non-returning students were in undeclared career, transfer and liberal arts curricula. The study indicated a significant difference in retention between students who enrolled in an undeclared career or transfer curriculum and those enrolled in an occupational program. Also, in the survey, those enrolled to pursue an associate degree were much more likely to plan to return to College. Our initial efforts should be focused on those students enrolled in degreed programs and secondly, to those selecting only one or two courses.

This study helped to establish benchmarks of students who are drop-outs, stop-outs and opt-outs. These are estimated numbers since we have 21% of the students who were "unsure" about returning. The drop-outs are those who do not plan to return and did not meet their goal (8.2%). The stop-outs are those who plan to return in the future (57.7%) and opt-outs are those who planned only to take one or two courses and met their objective and do not plan to return (12.4%).

The reasons for non-returning students included work related issues, financial difficulties, and personal issues. Strategies need to be developed on campus to address those support systems in areas that we can help, like financial support and flexible delivery systems for students who are employed, and an understanding that many personal problems (i.e. health) may need to be resolved at the individual level.

Recommendation: Use baseline data to develop strategies to increase retention and outreach to students in career programs. Develop secondary plans to define market demands of students seeking personal enrichment.

- **How many non-returning students plan to enroll in the future?**

This particular issue offers an opportunity for Schoolcraft to direct its marketing efforts to increase enrollment. There were 2,389 students who were planning to return next semester, at a later date, or were unsure. If we were to enroll all of these students, the tuition revenue itself would generate $595,626. Only 21% or 643 of the 3,063 non-returning students did not want to return to Schoolcraft.

Recommendation: A long-term plan should be investigated to continually collect the data and use to increase retention. Direct resources to conduct outreach to non-returning students on an ongoing basis.

In summary, there were five recommendations made. In short form, they are:

1) Collect more defined data on enrollment to better predict trends.

2) Increase efforts to provide students with some type of financial assistance and support.

3) The administration needs to plan retention strategies to market to students about returning to Schoolcraft.

4) Use baseline data to develop strategies to increase retention and outreach to students in career programs. Develop secondary plans to define market demands of students seeking personal enrichment.

5) A long-term plan should be investigated to continually collect the data and use to increase retention. Direct resources to conduct outreach to non-returning students on an ongoing basis.

Non-Returning Student Survey

1. What was your purpose, that is, your educational goal in attending Schoolcraft College. Was it to:

45	45%	Receive an Associate Degree
25	25%	Improve your existing job skills
13	13%	Prepare for your first career job
27	27%	Obtain university transfer credit
31	31%	Personal enrichment
		Did you have another goal

2. Which of the following best describes how you expected to accomplish your goal at Schoolcraft College?

29	29%	By only taking a selected course or courses
1	1%	Obtaining a one year certificate
3	3%	Obtaining a two year certificate
38	38%	Obtaining an Associate Degree
23	23%	By taking university transfer courses
3	3%	Or did you expect to accomplish your goal in a different way
3	3%	Missing

3. Do you plan to enroll at Schoolcraft College in the future? (select only one)
(If Yes) Do you expect to enroll next term or at some later date?

21	21%	No, ask question #4
25	25%	Yes, next term, skip to question #5
32	32%	Yes, at later date, skip to question #5
21	21%	Unsure, ask question #4
1	1%	Missing

4. What one factor would most influence you to re-enroll at Schoolcraft College? (Probe for as much detail as possible, get all possible reasons including positive and negative)

0	0%	Off-campus courses
3	3%	Saturday classes/weekend
3	3%	If job changes permit it
6	6%	If financial help is available
5	5%	Improved instructional quality
4	4%	More class offerings
6	6%	Don't know
7	7%	Other

5. May I ask, why did you not return to Schoolcraft College? (Probe for as much detail as possible, get all possible reasons including positive and negative)

4	4%	Transfer to a four year college
0	0.%	Unsure of my academic/career goal
1	1%	Became dissatisfied with career field
2	2%	Had difficulty finding enough time to study
2	2%	Only interested in a particular course
1	1%	Program was not what I expected
2	2%	Courses too difficult to understand
1	1%	Needed tutorial assistance
4	4%	Did not like my teacher(s)
1	1%	Courses needed were not available
6	6%	Classes conflicted with work schedule
4	4%	Found a job (in occupation trained for)
2	2%	Found a job (in another occupation)
2	2%	Job change prevented going to school
20	20%	Financial difficulty, could not afford it
1	1%	Did not feel education was worth the time
4	4%	Moved away
4	4%	Health problems
2	2%	Got married/divorced, status changed
0	0%	Felt uncomfortable with younger people
23	23%	Other

6. Do you think a visit with a Schoolcraft counselor or faculty member would have been helpful to you at the time you were terminating your experience at Schoolcraft College?

63	63%	No
12	12%	Yes
17	17%	Does not apply
8	8%	Don't know

7. Now I am going to read you several statements about Schoolcraft College. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	Missing
Schoolcraft College has high quality academic programs	11	78	3	0	6	2
Schoolcraft College has high quality courses in my subject area	11	73	9	0	6	1
There are a large number of courses offered at Schoolcraft	11	77	5	1	5	1
Schoolcraft College has too many requirements for entrance into college level courses	0	7	69	10	13	1

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply	Missing
Schoolcraft College has too many required general education courses	1	18	60	2	18	1
Schoolcraft College offers a wide variety of upper level sophomore classes	1	52	10	0	35	2

8. In your opinion was the cost of fees at Schoolcraft College:

19	19%	Very reasonable
64	64%	Somewhat reasonable
14	14%	Or was it unreasonable
3	3%	Missing

9. In your opinion was the cost of tuition at Schoolcraft College:

30	30%	Very reasonable
62	62%	Somewhat reasonable
6	6%	Or was it unreasonable
2	2%	Missing

10. Do you feel you received your money's worth from Schoolcraft College:

77	77%	Yes
14	14%	No
8	8%	Not Sure
1	1%	Missing

11. Would you rate your overall educational experience at Schoolcraft College as:

19	19%	Excellent, skip to question #13
49	49%	Good, skip to question #13
24	24%	Average, skip to question #13
3	3%	Fair, skip to question #13
4	4%	Below average, ask question #12
1	1%	Missing

12. Why do you think that your experience was below average?

_____

_____

_____

13. Were you attending classes on the main campus of Schoolcraft College or an extension location?

51	51%	Main campus (Livonia)
20	20%	Extension site (Garden City-Radcliff, Plymouth-Canton, Clarenceville)
26	26%	Both
3	3%	Missing

14. Would you like to be contacted by Schoolcraft about returning?

38	**38%**	Yes
62	**62%**	No

Name: _____
Address: _____

This ends our survey. Thank you very much for helping Schoolcraft College on this project.

Interviewer's signature_____Date:_____